

Today I was honored to accept the [American Society of Transplantation's](#) Legislator of the Year Award. Every day, 17 people die while waiting for a transplant of a vital organ, such as a heart, liver, kidney, pancreas or lung. The most effective way to increase the number of transplants is to improve how we educate patients, friends, family and the general public regarding the issue.

About 70 percent of all organ transplants are for kidneys. Recognizing this, as the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Kidney Caucus I introduced H.R. 1245, The Kidney Disease Education Benefits Act of 2007, which focuses more resources on educating patients by explaining the benefits of transplantation compared with costly dialysis.

You can sign up for the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry [here](#) .